

THE MECHANICS OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND ROLE EXPECTATIONS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN A PRIVATE HOSPITAL IN BHUBANESWAR

JHILLI MOHAPATRA¹ & DR. ARPITA MITRA²

¹Research Scholar, Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (Deemed to be University),
School of Law, Patia, Bhubaneswar, India

²Associate Professor, Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (Deemed to be University),
School of Law, Patia, Bhubaneswar, India

ABSTRACT

Society has assigned women the responsibility of ensuring peaceful domesticity and skilful upbringing of the future generation. Today's society has added on another responsibility to women: contributing to family income, thereby shouldering dual expectations. In her Endeavour to do justice to both the public and private sphere she is stressed out to juggle both career and family. Two opposite roles, two opposite demands, and lots of expectations from family and workplace create role conflict for women. The growing expectations of health care institutions calls for enhanced work pressure and cut throat competition for success in the health care sectors becomes the new segments where employees stress is much higher. Anxiety and stress due to perverse demands from management creates occupational stress which affects the family life of working women. Further inability to fulfil familial duties adds on to their woes. The present study is a small sample survey where primary data has been collected through questionnaire from women, more specifically doctors and nurses working in a private hospital in Bhubaneswar. The study seeks to explore how women employees in hospitals torn between work and familial responsibilities, are subjected to psychological, physical, emotional, and social harm due to undue social expectations..

KEYWORDS: Gender, Occupational Stress, Role Conflict, Role Expectation & Work Balance

Received: Apr 06, 2019; **Accepted:** Apr 26, 2019; **Published:** Mar 31, 2019; **Paper Id.:** IJMPERDJUN2019135

1. INTRODUCTION

We are now living in the age of stress and anxiety. Right from the very beginning to the end of the life, people invariably are exposed to various stressful situations. But stress is not always bad; a little amount of stress is needed to lead a productive and creative life. Stress in the workplace is increasingly a crucial problem for employees, employers and for the organization as a whole, but it is unavoidable and an essential part of life.¹⁻² Excessive work pressure, more expectations from the family and work place, and exceptional situations are the main reason of stress particularly in the life of working women.³

Special social legislation and spread of education and responsiveness widen the women's status from household chores to a higher level of professional actions. This change has inspired and provoked the women to work outside the domicile, which create conflicting situations for women employees who engaged in both the

professionals and as the role of housewife, mother at a time⁴. Too much of stress may affect the person's efficiency as well as negatively impacted on physical, psychological and social life of working women's. Among all the employees, working women's of private hospital professionals are experiencing more stress, due to their nature of the job and they face some unavoidable situations in their everyday life which creates stress among them. Anxiety and stress due to the demands from dissimilar patients and organization creates workplace stress which affects the family & social life of working women of the private hospital sector. Working in an enclosed environment, regularly dealing with death and misery, extreme workload, long working hours and shift duties, are the vital factors contributing to the job stress which leads to physical and psychological harms. The present study seeks to assess role conflict faced by women employees in a private hospital in Bhubaneswar due to occupational stress and high social expectations.

2. CONCEPTUALIZING OCCUPATIONAL STRESS, ROLE EXPECTATIONS AND ROLE CONFLICT

Psychological tension because of personal and workplace stressors is regarded as Occupational stress. 5Conflict between professional life and personal life, specifically conflict between job and familial responsibilities are major stressors. 6Role expectations are the way others believe that a person should act in a given context. 7Role conflict comes to mind while people receive conflicting information about occupational tasks or standard from different individuals; When compliance with one role requirement may make it difficult to comply with another it results role conflict.8- 9

3. SUMMARY OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

3.1. Gender, Work and Occupational Stress

From time immemorial women have filled diverse roles in their home activities as wives, as mothers, as home makers.¹⁰ Today women were breaking all the boundary of the household chores in harmonizing the domestic life as well as personal life, giving a boost up to their social position in the process. The major problem of working women arises as the disharmony between dual responsibilities like domestic work as well as official work. Working mothers are more exposed to work related stress than their male counter parts.¹¹⁻¹² Managing multiple roles is great when both work and family responsibilities are heavy.¹³ Despite the potential for women to experience role conflict and role overload by combine occupation and homemaker roles, there appears to be positive effects of combine home and job responsibilities.¹⁴ Juggling heavy household tasks reduce the pleasure of both the responsibilities and may leave women vulnerable to depression and anxiety.^{15- 17} Women would be given wide-ranging of support in terms of labour legislation, social protection, and other support services to participate in the various industrialized sectors. The appropriate measures for the women will be accompanying with support services for securing, transportation and safety for women workers.¹⁸ Women started working due to financial stringencies and a desire to have a better standard of living, hence women face various types of harassments and tensions either at home or in the factory.¹⁹

Stress is a state of psychological or emotional strain or anxiety resulting from unpleasant or challenging circumstances. It can be caused by two things, mainly it is down to whether you think situation around you are precious or stressful, and then is down to how are body reacts to your thinking process. Positive stresses strengthen the individual for next encounter, whereas negative stress adversely affects physical or psychological factors. Occupational stress or stress at work place is the harmful physical and emotional reaction that occur when the requirement of job compete with the capability of workers.²⁰

3.2. Gender and Role Conflict

When the incompatible demands placed upon a person such that balance with both (personal and professional) would be difficult then role conflict occurs.²¹ The working women are required to perform compound tasks and multiple roles which at times juggling with each other. Role conflict are of two types, Intra role conflict: (personal expectations are above than the actual performance) and Inter role conflict: persons performing many roles often conflict among the roles.²² Working Women experience more diffuse and wide ranging conflict between occupation and parenting.

3.3. Balancing Work and Social Life

The concept balance between work and social life used to explain the equilibrium between allocated time for job and other aspects of life. It affects health and wellbeing among the workers and their families. As the women take the role of the working professional in addition to their customary house chore activities they are comes under great pressure.²³⁻²⁴ Women experience considerably higher level of job stress, anxiety and depression than men, and many working women are juggling familial responsibilities, such as care for children's and aged parents, ²⁵and more often reported that insufficient time for relax and recreation.²⁶

3.4. Women in Hospital Sector

Stress is prevalent the life of the hospital professionals. One of the Bureau of Labour Statistics (BLS) states that 38.2% of physicians and surgeons were female and 90% of registered nurses were female.¹¹ 73% of diagnostic related technologists and technicians were women in 2016. About 5 to 20 percent of nurses and others whose jobs demand intense involvement with people suffer from burnout.²⁷ One research study revealed that women hospital assistants practiced much high blood pressure when working with an ineffective rather than an effective supervisor. Over a sustained period this high blood pressure would increase the chances of stroke by 38 percent.²⁸ An International Labor Organization study reported that more than 60 percent of health care staff in Bulgaria, Australia, South Africa, and Portugal experienced at least one incident of physical or psychological violence in the previous year. [Bureau of Labour statistics National census of Fatal Occupational injuries in 2004, US department of Labour news release Washington DC].

4. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The present study is exploratory in nature, where primary data is collected with a self-administered questionnaire. The women, particularly, Doctors, Nurses, and Lab Technicians working in Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS), Bhubaneswar, Odisha constituted as the population of the study. Pradyumna Bal Memorial Hospital, PBMH, and Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences, KIMS (hospital and medical college) Bhubaneswar is one of the leading private Medical College in Odisha founded in the year 2007 under the affiliation of KIIT University Bhubaneswar. Hundred women employees of Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS), the age group between 20 and 45 are the universe of the study (doctors, nurse, and Lab Technicians), among them 30% were doctors, 56% were nurses and 14% were in Lab Technician post. According to the description of the population characteristics most of the women employees are married (84%) and most of them were single (16%). This is a small sample survey in which hundred number of questionnaires were distributed to the women employees of Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences and Pradyumna Bal Memorial Hospital, Bhubaneswar. Non probability sampling method was used to select the sample units within the hospital for study, Purposive sampling and snow ball sampling were used for this study.

5. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

5.1. Occupational Stress and Social Expectations

5.1.1. Alienated from Family

34% of the respondents were of the opinion that due to the busy schedule they neglect their in-laws. 32% reported that they had not given adequate time to their parents. 18% respondents reported that they neglected their social relations. 10% said that they neglected their children's and 6% respondents reported that they had no time for their partner also.

5.1.2. Alienated from Peers

48% women employees had no time for their friends and 32% sometimes met their friends. 16% of them met their friends weekly and only 4% said that yearly once they have a gathering with their friends.

5.1.3. Alienated from Acquaintances

34% of the respondents reported that they rarely found time to meet their neighbours. 36% of the lady staff opined that they have a moderate relation with their colleagues.

5.2. Occupational Stress and Role Conflict

5.2.1. Neglect of Self

66% of the respondents said that they were not getting sufficient time for themselves. 42% of them experienced stress in their workplace and nearly half of them required help in learning how to handle stress. 76% of the respondents suffered from chronic life style diseases like hypertension, depression, headache, sleeping disorder due to excessive work pressure from family and workplace. About 40% of the respondents did not have any means to relieve stress.

5.2.2. Neglect of Family

Alienation from family life can be a source of stress to health care professionals particularly for women those who have children and dependents at home. 64% of respondents said that they spent only 3 to 4 hours daily with their family members, 24% of the women staff was of the opinion that they spent only 1 to 2 hours daily with their family members. 60% of the women employees said their work and social responsibilities are equally balanced while the rest complained that they faced problems balancing their work and social life.

5.2.3. Neglect of Social Relations

66% of the women staff were of the opinion that work and family life is equally balanced. 34% of them believe that there was some imbalance between work and social life. 42% of the respondents said that they neglect their family. While 14% neglected themselves and 44% were worried that they neglect their professional life. This type of inconvenience sometimes creates stress for the employees particularly women employees working in hospital sector.

6. ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

Women employees of private hospital sectors experienced more stress due to the disharmony between their professional and personal life. Sometimes they stressed because of the alienation from family, peers and acquaintances. Due to their busy schedule sometimes they neglect their in laws, children's and sometimes their life partners, this creates a stress full situation to them and the occupational life also gets impacted for this reasons. Busy schedule sometimes creates

distance from their neighbours, friends and relatives. Therefore women suffer from a sense of role conflict and a sense of guilt about their inability to do adequate justice to either their jobs or their duty as home makers.

Alienation from family life can be a source of stress and anxiety to the hospital professionals particularly those who have kids and dependant at home. Still the sick children's responsibilities falls on the mother, sometimes due to the work over load the working mother is unable to give full attention towards the sick. Apart from this More than fifty percent respondents reported that they have not given adequate time to themselves also for recreation and relax. The consequence of stress is not only affects their job performance but also its effect on the individuals physical and psychological health. A large number of workers suffer from some chronic life style diseases like hypertension, insomnia, sleeping disorder etc. Neglect of social relations is also one of the vital reasons for experiencing stress. After the completion of their normal working hours and sometimes the shift duties they are not willing to attend parties, functions and other get together. This type of inconvenience sometimes makes a distance between themselves and their relatives, this results stress and anxiety. These physical and psychological stresses also affect the work achievements. Working mothers want flexible working hours, parental leave, workplace conveniences for unwell children, and more understanding from employers.

7. CONCLUDING REMARKS AND SUGGESTIONS

The result shows that due to the excessive work pressure from home and office the private hospital professionals sometimes feel as a victim of themselves. Working women of private hospital sectors feel themselves as a victim of social expectations for which they neglect themselves. Most of the working women do not get sufficient time to take rest and sleep and they become prone to have health problems. Due to the shortage of time for personal care some of the working women feel that they are not able to give enough time to other members of their families. Social life and Social gatherings are a part and parcel of the family life, but the women employees of health care institutions feel that due to the busy life schedule they are sometimes unable to attend social gatherings. This negligence of social tasks such as care giving for children's and other relatives, alienation from peers etc. create anxiety for working women and due to these they find themselves helpless. This helplessness can be overcome through self-care, concern from partners, co-parenting skills and sympathetic employers.

REFERENCES

1. Doublet, S.(2000), "*The Social Construction of the Meaning of Acute Stressors: A Qualitative Study of the Personal Accounts of Police Officers Using a Stress Counseling Service*", in "*Work & Stress*", 14, 226- 244.
2. Lazarus, R. S., (1966) "*Psychological Stress and the Coping Process*", New York: Mc Graw- Hill.
3. Chakrawal, A., and Goyal, P., (2016) "*Stress Management*", Studera Press, New Delhi, 226-244.
4. Hamilton, S. &Fagot, B. L.(1988), "*Chronic Stress and Coping Styles: A Comparison of Male and Female undergraduates*", *Journal of Personality and social Psychology*, 55(5), 819- 823.
5. Suresh, S., Aneesh, M. R., & Mani, K. (2018). *Demographic structure of devikulam taluk, Idukki District, Kerala*. *Indian Journal of Human Relations*, 52(1), 1-9.
6. Finney, C., Stergiopoulos, E., Hensel, J. Bonato, S., and Dewa, (2013), "*Occupational stressors associated with job stress and burnout in correctional officers: a systematic review*", *BMC Public Health*, Vol. 13(1), 82 – 94.
7. Hill, E. J., Erickson, J. J., Holmes, E. K., and Ferris, M., (2010) "*Workplace Flexibility, Work Hours, and Work life conflict: Finding the Extra Day or two*". *Journal of Family Psychology*, 24(3), 349 – 358.

8. Robbins, S. P., Judge, T. A., Vohra, N., (2013) "Organizational Behavior" 15th ed. Pearson, New Delhi, 295.
9. Reddy, S. S., Rani, G. S., & Jyothi, T. A. *Gender Differences In Perceived Stress Among Young Adults Pre And Post Counselling*.
10. French, J. R., & Caplan, R. D., (1972) "Organizational Stress and the Individual Strain". In A. J. Marrow (Ed.), "The Failure of Success"; AMACOM, New York, 30 - 66.
11. Tylor, A. (2008) "Understanding Sociology", 1st Edition, Cengage Publication, New Delhi, 168
12. Nickell, P., and Dorsey, J. M., (2002) "Management in Family Living", 4th ed., BS Publisher and Distributer Pvt. Ltd., 13.
13. Bhattacharjee, S. and Tripathy, P., (2012), "A Study on Psychological Stress of Working Women", vol. 2 (2) *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 434 - 445.
14. Sturges, J., & Guest, D., (2004), "Working to live or living to work? Work/ life balance early in the career". *Human Resource management Journal*, 14(4), 5 – 20.
15. Varghese, M. G., & Pandya, S. (2016). A Study On The Effectiveness Of Brain-Based-Learning Of Students Of Secondary Level On Their Academic Achievement In Biology, Study Habits And Stress. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 5(2), 103-122.
16. Emmons, C. Biernat, M. Teidje, L. B., Lang, E. L., & Wortman, C. B., (1990), "Stress, support and coping among women professionals with preschool children's." In J. Eckenrode & S. Gore (Eds.), "Stress between Work and Family," New York, Plenum Press, 61- 93.
17. Waldron, I., Weiss, C. C., & Hughes, M. E., (1998), "Interacting effects of multiple roles on women's health", *Journals of Health and Social Behavior*, 39, 216- 236.
18. Williams, K. J., Suls, J., Alliger, G. M., Learner, S. M., & Wan, C. K. (1991), " Multiple role juggling and daily mood states in working mothers: An experience sampling study", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 76(5), 664 -674.
19. Simon, R. W., (1995), "Gender, Multiple Roles, role meaning and Meaning Health", *Journal of Health and Social Behaviour*, 36 (2), 182-194.
20. Giddens, A., (2009), "Sociology" Women and Equality unit, sixth edition, Willey India Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi, 902-903.
21. Swathi, V., & Reddy, S. M., (2016), "Stress among Working Women" in *IJCEM*, vol.19,. see also www.IJCEM.org.
22. Ramanamma, A., & Bambawale, U., (1987), "Women in Indian Industry", Mittal Publications; New Delhi, 131- 132.
23. Orge, A., & Bigilda, N. (2018). Stressors and Coping Mechanisms of Faculty, in *Selected State Universities and Colleges in Region III, Philippines. Selected State Universities and Colleges in Region III, Philippines (February 26, 2018). International Journal of Human Resources Management (IJHRM) ISSN (P), 2319-4936*.
24. Kumar, A., & Yadav, M., (2015), "Occupational Stress among Working Women: An Experience with Analysis", *JNUB Journal of Management (online)*, 60-75.
25. Gourie, S. N., (2005), "Empowering women for gender Equity", No.65, *Women & Leadership*, 83-94.
26. Kumari, S., Patil, Y., & Rani, A., (2015) "Emerging Role Conflict among Female Faculty Members in Institutes", 01.
27. Matheswaran, V. P., & Hemalatha, V., (2015) vol.5, "A Study on Work Life Balance for Women Employees In Public and Private Sector Schools In Tiruvllur District" in *International Journal of Research in Management and Technology*, 197.

28. Valk, R., & Srinivasan, V., (2010), "Work family balance of Indian Women software professionals", Elsevier publisher; Bangalore, 30-50.
29. Szalai, A., (1972) (ed.), "Psychological factors and myocardial infarction – why and how?" *Advances in cardiology* 9,117-31.
30. Otto, R., (1972) "Negative and positive life experiences among men and women in selected occupations, systems awareness and visits to the doctor." *social science and Medicine* 13 (A), 151-64.
31. Farber, B. A., (2000a, 2000b), "Introduction and Understanding and Treating burnout in a changing Culture", *Journal of Clinical Psychology in session* 56, 589-594.
32. Wager, N., Field man, G., and Hussey, T. (2003), "The effect on Ambulatory Blood Pressure of Working under favorably and Unfavorably Perceived Supervisors", in *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 60 (7), 468- 474.

